



LOS ANGELES COUNTY REGIONAL PARK AND OPEN SPACE DISTRICT

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November 05, 2013

The Honorable Board of Directors
County of Los Angeles
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

ADOPTED

REGIONAL PARK AND OPEN SPACE DISTRICT

1-P November 5, 2013

Sachi A. Hamai
SACHI A. HAMAI
SECRETARY

Dear Directors:

ALLOCATE SPECIFIED EXCESS FUNDS AVAILABLE TO THE FIFTH SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT FOR A GRANT TO THE TRUST FOR PUBLIC LAND FOR THE LAS LOMAS ACQUISITION PROJECT (FIFTH DISTRICT - 3 - VOTE)

SUBJECT

These actions will allocate \$1,300,000 in Fifth Supervisorial District Specified Excess Funds for a grant to the Trust for Public Land for the acquisition of land in unincorporated Newhall Pass for preservation of open space and wildlife habitat.

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE BOARD:

1. Find the proposed Las Lomas Acquisition Project categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act because the project consists of acquisition of land to preserve existing natural conditions, including plant and animal habitats and for the reasons stated herein and the reasons reflected in the record of the project.
2. Allocate \$1,300,000 in Specified Excess Funds available to the Fifth Supervisorial District to the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy for a grant to the Trust for Public Land for the Las Lomas Acquisition Project in unincorporated Newhall Pass.

3. Authorize the Director of the Department of Parks and Recreation, in his capacity as Director of the Los Angeles County Regional Park and Open Space District, to award a grant in the total amount of \$1,300,000 for the Las Lomas Acquisition Project, after the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy has assigned its rights to apply for the funds to the Trust for Public Land and when applicable conditions have been met, and to administer the grants as of the date of award and pursuant to guidelines in the Procedural Guide for Specified, Per Parcel, and Excess Funds Projects, otherwise funds shall remain in the Excess Funds account.

PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTION

Approval of the recommended actions will allocate \$1,300,000 in Specified Excess Funds, available to the Fifth Supervisorial District pursuant to the Safe Neighborhood Parks Proposition of 1996 (1996 Proposition), to the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (SMMC) for a grant to the Trust for Public Land (TPL) for the Las Lomas Acquisition Project (Project).

The proposed Project consists of the acquisition of land in the unincorporated Newhall Pass area of the Fifth Supervisorial District for preservation as open space and wildlife habitat. Two properties, known as Gateway Ranch and Valley Vista, will be acquired for a total of approximately 550 acres which will connect existing publicly-owned open space and provide a direct link between the San Gabriel and Santa Susana Mountains.

The recommended \$1,300,000 in Specified Excess Funds will be supplemented with \$3,737,500 from the City of Santa Clarita, \$2,737,500 from the Wildlife Conservation Board, and \$350,000 from Caltrans' Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program for a total project cost of \$8,125,000.

It is also recommended that the Director of the Department of Parks and Recreation (Director) be authorized to award the grant after SMMC assigns its right to apply for the funds to TPL and when applicable conditions have been met, such as grantee qualifications, consistency between the projects and requirements of the 1996 Proposition, and grantee agreements to follow California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements for the projects, if applicable, and to administer the grants pursuant to the Procedural Guide previously approved by your Board.

Implementation of Strategic Plan Goals

The proposed recommendations further the Board approved County Strategic Plan Goals of Operational Effectiveness (Goal 1) by funding the acquisition of additional protected open space land in the Fifth Supervisorial District.

FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING

Sufficient appropriation for the grant, in the amount of \$1,300,000 is budgeted in the Fifth Supervisorial District portion of the Los Angeles County Regional Park and Open Space District's (RPOSD) Excess Funds Project Fund, HD6.

FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

The 1996 Proposition requires that agencies to which funds were allocated under the Safe Neighborhood Parks Propositions of 1992 and 1996 have encumbered all such funds before they may receive grants of Excess Funds. SMMC and TPL each meet this requirement.

The 1996 Proposition provides a method for determining each fiscal year the amount of funds available in the following fiscal year to fund capital improvement projects in addition to the amounts specifically identified for projects in the Safe Neighborhood Parks Propositions of 1992 and 1996. The recommended grants would be funded from the Excess Funds available to the Fifth Supervisorial District from Excess Funds for specified projects.

The Board may establish additional conditions on grants of Excess Funds. The Director would be authorized to award grants to the various grantees when all applicable conditions have been met. Any funds allocated by the Board, but not encumbered by award of a grant contract in the same fiscal year, shall be available for allocation by the Board in the following fiscal year.

On June 2, 2009, your Board approved the Procedural Guide, for governing the administration of District grants. The Procedural Guide will appropriately govern the administration of the recommended additional grants as well.

ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION

All projects funded by RPOSD are required to comply with CEQA as a condition of the grant. The lead agency is responsible for preparing the appropriate environmental documentation for the project. The SMMC is the lead agency for the Project.

The proposed Project is categorically exempt from CEQA according to Section 15325 (a) of the State CEQA Guidelines and Class 25 (a) of the County's Environmental Document Reporting Procedures and Guidelines, Appendix G, because the proposed Project consists of acquisition of land to preserve existing open space.

CONTRACTING PROCESS

A Grant Project Agreement will be entered into and administered under authority delegated to the Director and pursuant to the Procedural Guide approved by the Board in 2009 only if all applicable conditions of the grants have been met. The Project Agreement will be approved as to form by County Counsel.

IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES (OR PROJECTS)

The proposed Project will enhance the environment through the preservation of open space and wildlife habitat in the Fifth Supervisorial District.

CONCLUSION

Please instruct the Executive Officer-Clerk of the Board to return one adopted copy of this action to the Chief Executive Office, Capital Projects Division, and to the Department of Parks and Recreation.

Respectfully submitted,



RUSS GUINEY
Director

RG:JB:WRO

c: Chief Executive Office
County Counsel
Executive Office, Board of Supervisors